

Singapore Company Update

16 February 2024 Property | REITS

Keppel Pacific Oak US REIT (KORE SP)

Buy (Maintained)

Sharp Near-Term Pain For Long-Term Gain; BUY

Target Price (Return): USD0.29 (+89%)
Price (Market Cap): USD0.15 (USD158m)
ESG score: 3.1 (out of 4)
Avg Daily Turnover (USD/USD) 0.86m/0.86m

• BUY, new TP of USD0.29 from USD0.48, 89% upside. Keppel Pacific Oak US REIT's shock announcement of suspending distributions resulted in a steep 40% fall in share price yesterday. We see this dividend payment cut as a short-term pain in order to better preserve long-term value, especially with resilient operational income. The knee-jerk share price correction is

overdone, in our view, and we expect value-driven investors to enter once

the dust settles, with KORE trading at 0.2x FY24F P/BV.

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Analyst

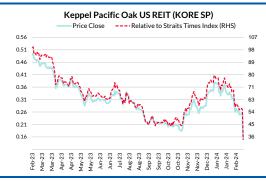
- Distributions to be used to fund capex in order to maximise NPI. KORE will suspend distributions starting from 2H23 until 2H25. The withheld amount would be primarily used to fund its planned capex of USD60m in FY24 and USD50m for FY25. The capex would be spent across assets in order to provide the right amenities, create speculative office suits for which there is good demand, as well as improve overall asset positioning. While various options to raise capital such as raising equity, divestments or securing new debt were considered, none were feasible due to the current challenging market conditions. Management remains open to the above options should these arise in future which may lead to the early resumption of divdend payments. KORE's strategy in the current market is to continue to reinvest strategically, to stay relevant to current and prospective tenants.
- Portfolio valuation declined by a more modest c.7% in FY23 (our estimate: 10% decrease). The lower decline in our view was a result of its above strategy of continuing to invest in the right assets as well as its active leasing efforts. We believe the US office market is at the tail-end of an asset devaluation cycle, with interest rates peaking. Gearing has risen to 43.2%, but remains well within the 45% limit. KORE will also consider divesting Iron Point and 1800 West Loop South (deemed as non-core assets) should market conditions bounce back, in order to de-lever and recycle capital. c.USD75m of its loans (majority on floating interest ratse) are expiring in 4Q24. Based on recent talks with lenders, it expects this to be refinanced. Interest cost for FY24 is expected slightly higher at ~4.3% (FY23:4.1%).
- Portfolio occupancy rate expected to stay resilient, with the overall occupancy rate at 90.3% (3Q23: 91.4%). About 10% of leases by rental income are due for renewal this year, with the majority coming from Seattle assets. Management expects its overall portfolio occupancy rate to stay above 88% by the end of the year. Rental reversions are expected to be flattish to slight negative. Overall, we remain fairly confident on KORE's operational income generation potential.
- Our TP is pegged to 0.4x FY24F P/BV (vs DDM methodology), which buffers a further 30% decline in asset valuation. KORE's ESG score of 3.1 is at par with the country median, so we apply a 0% ESG premium/discount.

Forecasts and Valuation	Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24F	Dec-25F	Dec-26F
Total turnover (USDm)	148	151	145	150	153
Net property income (USDm)	84.3	86.1	85.2	88.3	90.4
Reported net profit (USDm)	48.5	(67.7)	23.6	52.3	55.4
Total distributable income (USDm)	60.6	52.2	51.0	51.7	53.8
DPS (USD)	0.06	0.03	na	na	0.05
DPS growth (%)	(8.6)	(56.9)	(100.0)	0.0	0.0
P/B (x)	0.19	0.22	0.21	0.20	0.20
Dividend Yield (%)	38.4	16.6	na	na	34.1
Return on average equity (%)	5.7	(8.6)	3.2	6.8	6.9
Return on average assets (%)	3.2	(4.6)	1.7	3.6	3.7

Source: Company data, RHB

Share Performance (%)

YID	1m	3m	6m	12m
(59.7)	(59.2)	(44.1)	(44.1)	(69.2)
(57.7)	(58.5)	(45.5)	(42.4)	(66.0)
w/high (l	JSD)		0.15	5 -0.50
	(59.7) (57.7)	(59.7) (59.2)	(59.7) (59.2) (44.1) (57.7) (58.5) (45.5)	(59.7) (59.2) (44.1) (44.1) (57.7) (58.5) (45.5) (42.4)



Source: Bloomberg

Overall ESG Score: 3.1 (out of 4)

E: GOOD

For FY22, KORE's Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions were 15.2% lower than 2019 levels, while there was an 8.5% YoY decrease in waste. It targets to decrease GHG emissions by 30% by 2030 from 2019 levels, and has developed a 2-year roadmap to progressively implement Taskforce on Climate-related Disclosures (TCFD) recommendations.

S: GOOD

It has a high employee engagement score of >70%. Each employee received an average of 21.2 training hours in FY22, ie exceeding its target. In 2022, the REIT manager, together with staff of Keppel Capital, committed about 1,000 volunteer hours to community initiatives.

G: EXCELLENT

There is an increasing level of earnings disclosure and timely market updates. The majority of the Board comprise independent directors and overall membership is diverse. KORE also has a well-established corporate governance framework relating to Board matters.

Note:

Small cap stocks are defined as companies with a market capitalisation of less than USD0.5bn.



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Financial Exhibits

Asia
Singapore
Property
Keppel Pacific Oak US REIT
KORE SP
Buy

Valuation basis

DDM

Key drivers

- i. Portfolio focussed on growth markets with tech and healthcare tenants;
- ii. Migration of tenants to suburban and low-cost states will benefit the REIT;
- iii. Limited tenant concentration risks.

Key risks

- i. US economy entering into a recession, accompanied by high interest rates;
- ii. Prolonged structural changes impacting the demand for office space;
- Collapse in office values from the lack of financing.

Company Profile

Keppel Pacific Oak US REIT principally invests in a diversified portfolio of income-producing commercial assets and real estate-related assets in key growth markets of the US, with favourable economic and office fundamentals that are above the national average. This strategy aims at providing sustainable distributions and strong total returns for unitholders.

Financial summary	Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24F	Dec-25F	Dec-26F
Recurring EPS (USD)	0.05 -	0.06	0.02	0.05	0.05
EPS (USD)	0.05 -	0.06	0.02	0.05	0.05
DPS (USD)	0.06	0.03	-	-	0.05
BVPS (USD)	0.81	0.69	0.72	0.77	0.77
Return on average equity (%)	5.7	(8.6)	3.2	6.8	6.9
Weighted avg adjusted shares (m)	1,044.45	1,044.45	1,044.45	1,044.45	1,044.45

Valuation metrics		Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24F	Dec-25F	Dec-26F
Recurring P/E (x)		3.25	na	6.68	3.02	2.85
P/E (x)		3.25	na	6.68	3.02	2.85
P/B (x)		0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
FCF Yield (%)		22.7	23.8	14.2	19.5	45.9
Dividend Yield (%)		38.4	16.6	-	-	34.1
EV/EBITDA (x)	-	9.69 -	7.65 -	8.15 -	8.50 -	8.31
EV/EBIT (x)	-	9.69 -	7.65 -	8.15 -	8.50 -	8.31

Income statement (USDm)	Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24F	Dec-25F	Dec-26F
Total turnover	148	151	145	150	153
EBITDA	78	80	79	82	84
Operating profit	78	80	79	82	84
Net interest	(19)	(24)	(26)	(27)	(26)
Pre-tax profit	48	(99)	24	52	55
Taxation	0	31	0	0	0
Recurring net profit	48	(68)	24	52	55

Cash flow (USDm)	Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24F	Dec-25F	Dec-26F
Change in working capital	2.4	6.3	6.5	1.8	1.3
Cash flow from operations	79.4	84.2	82.5	80.8	82.3
Capex	(43.6)	(46.7)	(60.0)	(50.0)	(10.0)
Cash flow from investing activities	(7.8)	(46.7)	(60.0)	(50.0)	(10.0)
Dividends paid	(58.0)	(55.1)	0.0	0.0	(53.8)
Cash flow from financing activities	(59.3)	(58.0)	(24.6)	(28.0)	(56.0)
Cash at beginning of period	51.0	63.4	43.8	41.9	44.9
Net change in cash	12.3	(20.5)	(2.1)	2.8	16.3
Ending balance cash	63.3	43.0	41.7	44.7	61.2

Balance sheet (USDm)	Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24F	Dec-25F	Dec-26F
Total cash and equivalents	63	44	42	45	61
Total investments	1,423	1,326	1,360	1,410	1,420
Total other assets	27	18	16	16	17
Total assets	1,520	1,394	1,425	1,479	1,506
Short-term debt	10	75	40	10	20
Total long-term debt	567	525	559	589	603
Total liabilities	673	670	678	680	705
Shareholders' equity	846	723	747	799	801
Total equity	846	723	747	799	801
Net debt	514	556	557	554	562
Total liabilities & equity	1,520	1,394	1,425	1,479	1,506

Key metrics	Dec-22	Dec-23	Dec-24F	Dec-25F	Dec-26F
Revenue growth (%)	4.8	1.9	(4.1)	3.6	2.3
Recurrent EPS growth (%)	(41.0)	(239.7)	0.0	121.3	5.9
Operating EBITDA margin (%)	52.4	53.1	54.8	54.9	55.0
Net profit margin (%)	32.8	(44.9)	16.3	34.9	36.1
Dividend payout ratio (%)	124.9	(38.6)	0.0	0.0	97.2
Capex/sales (%)	29.5	31.0	41.5	33.4	6.5
Interest cover (x)	4.16	3.25	3.04	3.05	3.26

Source: Company data, RHB



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Small Cap Asean Research

Figure 1: Portfolio valuation

Property	31 December 2022 (US\$ 'million)	Capex	FV gain/(loss) on Investment Property	31 December 2023 (US\$ 'million)	Change (US\$ 'million)	% Change
The Plaza Buildings Seattle, Bellevue CBD	340.0	5.3	(37.6)	307.7	(32.3)	(9.5)
Bellevue Technology Center Seattle, Eastside Bellevue	155.0	8.6	(23.0)	140.6	(14.4)	(9.3)
The Westpark Portfolio Seattle, Redmond	230.0	4.5	(10.5)	224.0	(6.0)	(2.6)
Great Hills Plaza Austin, Northwest	41.2	1.5	0.9	43.6	2.4	5.8
Westech 360 Austin, Northwest	47.3	1.6	(1.8)	47.1	(0.2)	(0.4)
Westmoor Center Denver, Northwest	130.2	4.9	(29.4)	105.7	(24.5)	(18.8)
105 Edgeview Denver, Broomfield	60.0	0.3	(3.6)	56.7	(3.3)	(5.5)
Bridge Crossing Nashville, Brentwood	43.3	0.1	(2.1)	41.3	(2.0)	(4.6)
1800 West Loop South Houston, Galleria/Uptown	76.9	2.7	(4.0)	75.6	(1.3)	(1.7)
Bellaire Park Houston, Galleria/Bellaire	51.3	4.9	(8.9)	47.3	(4.0)	(7.8)
One Twenty Five Dallas, Las Colinas	105.6	2.6	(1.2)	107.0	1.4	1.3
Maitland Promenade I & II Orlando, Maitland	93.8	5.3	(7.6)	91.5	(2.3)	(2.5)
Iron Point Sacramento, Folsom	48.8	2.9	(13.5)	38.2	(10.6)	(21.7)
Total Portfolio Value	1,423.4	45.2	(142.3)	1,326.3	(97.1)	(6.8)

Source: Company data

Figure 2: Limited concentration risks from the top 10 tenants

Top 10 Tenants	Sector	Asset	Location	% of CRI	% of NLA
Ball Aerospace	TAMI	Westmoor Center	Denver	3.7	4.2
Comdata Inc	TAMI	Bridge Crossing	Nashville	3.7	3.9
Gogo Business Aviation	TAMI	105 Edgeview	Denver	2.9	2.5
Lear Cooperation	TAMI	The Plaza Buildings	Seattle – Bellevue/Redmond	2.9	1.3
Meta	TAMI	The Westpark Portfolio	Seattle – Bellevue/Redmond	2.8	2.6
TerraPower	TAMI	Bellevue Technology Center	Seattle – Bellevue/Redmond	2.5	2.0
Spectrum	TAMI	Maitland Promenade I & II	Orlando	2.2	2.1
Zimvie ⁽¹⁾	TAMI	Westmoor Center	Denver	2.1	2.2
United Capital Financial Advisor	Finance & Insurance	One Twenty Five	Dallas	1.8	1.1
Bio-Medical Applications	Medical & Healthcare	One Twenty Five	Dallas	1.7	1.1
Total				26.3	23.0
WALE by NLA					4.5 years
WALE by CRI					4.7 years

Source: Company data

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Emissions And ESG

Trend analysis

KORE's Scope 1 and 2 emissions declined by 7% and 15% from 2021 and 2019 levels. The reduction is commendable, considering that this was achieved despite more tenants returning to offices last year post-pandemic. The reduction was achieved as a result of the various energy optimisation initiatives in place.

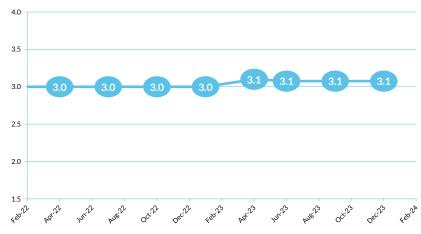
Emissions (tCO2e)	Dec-21	Dec-22	Dec-23
Scope 1	577	600	na
Scope 2	3,544	3,242	na
Scope 3	23,482	37,996	na
Total emissions	27,603	41,838	na

Source: Company data, RHB

Latest ESG-Related Developments

- The REIT's Scope 3 emission screening exercise was initiated in 2021, and the full inventory of categories of impact was widened to understand the actual scope of impact.
- KORE has also developed a 2-year roadmap to progressively implement the Taskforce on Climate-related Disclosures (TCFD) recommendations.

ESG Rating History



Source: RHB

Recommendation Chart



Source: RHB, Bloomberg

Date	Recommendation	Target Price	Price
2023-10-19	Buy	0.48	0.21
2023-07-26	Buy	0.56	0.30
2023-06-19	Buy	0.64	0.31
2023-04-19	Buy	0.64	0.36
2023-02-02	Buy	0.69	0.58
2022-10-27	Buy	0.74	0.55
2022-07-27	Buy	0.87	0.69
2022-01-27	Buy	0.92	0.76
2021-09-22	Buy	0.90	0.78
2021-07-27	Buy	0.90	0.80
2021-01-28	Buy	0.84	0.73
2020-10-22	Buy	0.80	0.71
2020-06-07	Buy	0.80	0.73
2020-04-13	Buy	0.76	0.54
2020-01-22	Buy	0.88	0.79

Source: RHB, Bloomberg



RHB Guide to Investment Ratings

Buy: Share price may exceed 10% over the next 12 months

Trading Buy: Share price may exceed 15% over the next 3 months, however longer-

term outlook remains uncertain

Neutral: Share price may fall within the range of +/- 10% over the next

12 months

Take Profit: Target price has been attained. Look to accumulate at lower levels Sell: Share price may fall by more than 10% over the next 12 months

Not Rated: Stock is not within regular research coverage

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